

Report

Lake Meredith National Recreation Area and Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument

■ 1.0 Site Description

Lake Meredith National Recreation Area (NRA) and Alibates Flint Quarries NRA is located approximately 40 miles north of Amarillo, Texas in the Texas panhandle. The park primarily consists of a 12,000-acre man-made reservoir developed by the Bureau of Reclamation for flood control and water supply. The reservoir was created by the building of the Sanford Dam along the Canadian River. The nearly 1.7 million annual visitors enjoy swimming and boating along with hunting, fishing, and camping.

In addition to the reservoir, the site also contains the Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument, considered to be a world-class archeological site. The Monument includes numerous small quarries as well as other American Indian historical and archeological sites. Currently, visitors to the quarries are limited to guided ranger tours via private automobile and a short hike to the top of a bluff.

■ 2.0 Existing ATS

There is currently no Alternative Transportation Systems (ATS) in the park.

■ 3.0 ATS Needs

There is currently no significant need for ATS at either Lake Meredith or the Alibates Flint Quarries. The park has recently improved many of its roadways and does not suffer any serious congestion either inside or outside the park boundaries. The developed sites around the lake including camp grounds, boat launches, and beaches are well distributed and have no transportation related problems.

In the very long term (more than 25 years), a shuttle system may need to be implemented around the flint quarries. Currently, all visits to the quarries are by guided ranger tour. Tours leave twice a day from a contact station, with visitors following a ranger in their private vehicles to a location near the main areas of interest. From there, the group walks up to visit the quarries. In the future, when and if a new Visitor Center is built, provisions

for a shuttle bus to remove the private automobile from the monument should be incorporated. The current method of visitation works because of the small number (3,500) of visitors to the site. Site managers do not anticipate a significant increase in visitation to the quarries in the near or mid-term future.

■ 4.0 Basis of ATS Needs

Providing a shuttle bus at the National Monument could assist in the preservation and interpretation of a world-class archeological site. While the current method of visiting the quarries does not create a significant environmental impact, as visitor levels increase in the future, there will be a need to remove private vehicles from the site. Visitation levels may not reach this level for more than 20 years.

■ 5.0 Bibliography

Lake Meredith NRT. Internet site: <http://www.nps.gov/lamr>. November 22, 1999.

■ 6.0 Persons Interviewed

John Benjamin, Superintendent, telephone interview, November 1999